

Fall River RCD Lower Pit Watershed



Amount Funded: \$195,518

Additional Funding Obtained to Date:

Background

The Lower Pit River watershed spreads across northeastern California. Water drains into Shasta Lake and ultimately into the Sacramento River. The watershed's diverse landscape offers opportunities and challenges in aquatic, forest, and rangeland ecosystems. Invasive species and non-point source pollution impact watershed ecosystems and the resources they support. Noxious and aquatic weeds, including Eurasian watermilfoil, perennial pepperweed, and purple loosestrife obstruct water flow to hydropower facilities, reduce agricultural production, and alter ecosystem function of fish, plants, and wildlife. Tributaries to the Pit River are also impaired by non-point source pollution impacts. The Fall River is listed as an "impaired water body."

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Developed draft physical and biological management plans for Eurasian watermilfoil.
- ◆ Published article in the District newsletter emphasizing noxious weeds impacts and current activities to them.
- ◆ Presented Milfoil identification, impacts, and management options at public meetings. Provided forum to meet new stakeholders and increase community involvement.
- ◆ Worked with local landowners to develop spray program for Purple Loosestrife.
- ◆ Prepared a perennial pepperweed draft management plan for the watershed.
- ◆ Conducted site visits on private property to begin monitoring for aquatic weeds and water quality.



CDFA staff scientist discussing distribution of Purple Loosestrife biocontrol agents in the Lower Pit River watershed.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Watershed Management - Coordinated University of California research staff and private landowners to develop water quality and aquatic weed monitoring. Completed draft perennial pepperweed plan for distribution to technical advisory group. Conducted Purple Loosestrife monitoring and produced map which demonstrates the positive outcomes of a successful biological program on noxious weeds. Visited private landowners and communicated opportunities to participate in the California Department of Food and Agriculture Purple Loosestrife Spray program. Participated in meetings and other outreach activities designed to build partnerships and facilitate stakeholder involvement.

Friends of Deer Creek

Upper Yuba Watershed



Amount Funded: \$196,385

Additional Funding Obtained to Date: \$197,610

Background

Deer Creek is a major tributary within the Upper Yuba Watershed and provides water to the Bay-Delta system. Rapid population growth is causing dramatic changes to the environment and exerting tremendous pressure on the region's natural resources. Past mining practices, increased pesticide and herbicide runoff, and erosion from residential development have contributed to the creek's degradation. The area's high fuel loads and rural setting makes it very susceptible to fires. Due to decades of gold mining, the State posted a fish consumption advisory for mercury. Sedimentation of sand, silt, clay, and fine particulate matter make it difficult for fish to spawn and for people to enjoy the water for recreation.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Conducted a "town hall" Mercury Working Group meeting to involve citizens and stakeholders in a restoration effort.
- ◆ Involved community volunteers to continue work on a project that will restore a quarter mile section of Little Deer Creek.
- ◆ Researched and reported on wastewater alternatives for local tertiary wastewater treatment plants.
- ◆ Created a restoration plan based on the Deer Creek Coordinated Resource Management Plan.
- ◆ Coordinated individuals to speak at a future workshop on sediment and erosion; specifically targeted upon areas of erosion and roads that contribute to sediment deposition in the creek.



Deer Creek – Nevada City

Benefits to CALFED Program

Ecosystem Restoration/Science - Partnered with professionals from the SWB, Forest Service, USGS, City of Nevada City, County sanitation officials, University of Reno and Davis, Nevada Irrigation District and invited local citizens and stakeholders to research problems of mercury and methyl mercury in the Deer Creek watershed. Continued to evaluate water quality, conduct bacteria studies, and collect information on macro- invertebrates.

Ecosystem Restoration - Involved local children and youth in creek restoration efforts.

Science - Researched and assessed physical, biological and social processes that will address and improve the wastewater treatment effluent from local treatment plants.

Watershed Management - Researched and assessed conditions within the Deer Creek watershed using the Deer Creek Coordinated Resource Plan in order to create a watershed restoration plan. Continued to partner with community stakeholders to solicit and write grant applications to secure long-term support to affect and improve conditions in the greater watershed system.

Georgetown Divide RCD

South Fork American



Amount Funded: \$123,386

Additional Funding Obtained to Date: 18,157.02

Background

The watershed is located within the fastest growing region of the Sierra Nevada. Water quality is affected by many factors including timber and mining operations, agricultural runoff, industrial facilities, and recreational use. The threat of catastrophic fires is of paramount concern. Urban pockets are scattered throughout the area, often surrounded by thick vegetation. Fuel loads are growing rapidly. Structures, habitat, animals, and people are threatened. Although numerous reservoirs provide water for local use, hydroelectric production, and agricultural purposes, it is insufficient to meet everyone's needs. Competing demands create conflicts, which can only be resolved through collaboration and cooperation.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Collaborated with the Regional Watershed Coordination Team (RWCT) and the American River Conservancy to submit proposals to the Sierra Nevada Alliance (SNA) that address protection and restoration needs throughout the watershed.
- ◆ Presented the Watershed Education Summit to the American River Watershed Group to solicit participation and to increase cooperation throughout the region.
- ◆ Entered data collected by local high school students into the World Water Quality Monitoring database.
- ◆ Facilitated the South Fork American River Watershed Group meeting. Provided an opportunity to directly address stakeholder issues and concerns.
- ◆ Posted information to the American River Watershed Portal, a website that allows stakeholders to access information from many different sources.



Volunteers collect water samples for a monitoring program on the American River.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Science - Supported UC Davis researcher in writing a proposal to establish Algae sampling on the American River. Project will investigate the use of periphyton on rocky substrate as a cost-effective indicator of environmental condition and impacts in river tributary to the Delta.

Watershed Management - Completed and submitted an application for funding of Creek Stewardship Day in Traverse Creek, a priority sub-basin. Promoted local stewardship by establishing a Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program in Traverse Creek sub-watershed. Trained school and citizen groups to began collecting and compiling viable baseline water quality and habitat data from sub-watersheds. Coordinated a community event to disseminate information on wildlife issues to people living in the urban-wild land interface in the watershed.

Ecosystem Restoration - Worked with USFS to plant native grasses as part of restoring Meadowbrook Nature Area in Traverse Creek.

Glenn County RCD Upper Stony/Sacramento- Lower Thomes Watersheds



Amount Funded: \$78,292

Additional Funding Obtained to Date:

Background

The Stony Creek Watershed encompasses approximately 700 square miles of public and private land in Glenn, Colusa and Tehama Counties, and is the second largest Sacramento River tributary on the west side of the Sacramento River. *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix* have colonized much of the lower reach of the creek, and three dams built in the upper watershed have disrupted channel morphology. Natural gravel flow and recruitment has been blocked causing greater channel scouring and bank erosion. Access of anadromous salmonids to the upper reaches of the creek has also been blocked. In addition, water quality sampling by DWR has detected elevated levels of mercury in the sediment.

The watershed coordinator position is currently being funded through the CBDA Costa-Machado Water Act of 2000. The DOC grant will be used to sustain the position from June 2006 through June 2007.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Conducted outreach to local landowners and government agencies.
- ◆ Completed a watershed newsletter.
- ◆ Compiled agency literature pertaining to the Stony Creek watershed.
- ◆ Began developing informational handouts for watershed issues.
- ◆ Created a mailing list of landowners within the Stony Creek watershed.
- ◆ Participating with the Center for Land Based Learning SLEWS program.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Watershed Management - Coordinated planning of governmental and non-governmental organizations that are conducting water quality monitoring in and around the Stony Creek watershed.

**Los Angeles & San Gabriel
Rivers Watershed Council**
Los Angeles / San Gabriel Watersheds



Amount Funded: \$249,854

Additional Funding Obtained to Date: \$128,535

Background

The watersheds of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers cover 1,513 square miles, from the San Gabriel Mountains in the north to the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach. The two have been prehistorically linked as a single-braided channel system, and they share two major aquifers (Central Basin and Main San Gabriel Basin). The Los Angeles and San Gabriel watersheds are among the most heavily impacted by urbanization in Southern California. Imported water needs range between 55 and 65%. Water conservation is a significant challenge with the focus on reducing outdoor water consumption.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Supported the writing and publication of two newsletters that disseminated information on sustainable landscaping best management practices.
- ◆ Participated in the CA Department of Agriculture’s Weed Management Area Committee.
- ◆ Participated in the Watershed Council’s monthly Landscape Ethic Committee.
- ◆ Met with partner agency, Theodore Payne Foundation, to discuss outreach opportunities.
- ◆ Continued development of the database programming and design phases of the native plant image library.
- ◆ Prepared a project plan and wrote a pre-proposal for funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a native seed bank facility.
- ◆ Working with staff from the Recreation and Parks Department of the City of Los Angeles on a project involving a major landscaping effort near an ecologically sensitive area. The coordinator is proposing that the city utilize native plant species in landscape planning.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Ecosystem Restoration – Development of the native plant image library/database continues and will provide landscape design and architecture firms with appropriate locally native plan information. The coordinator is also working on a multi-agency effort to establish a new seed bank, storage, and distribution facility.

Mariposa RCD

Upper Merced Watershed



Amount Funded: \$155,654

Additional Funding Obtained to Date: \$475,905

Background

The Upper Merced River Watershed is generally considered to be in good condition; however, there are no systematic studies supporting the watershed's status. The economic vitality of local communities is uniquely dependent on the watershed's good health; recreation and tourism to Yosemite National Park are the basis of the county's economy. Downstream users of the river are also dependant on its water quality. Collection of baseline data is needed to help formulate future land use decisions and actual conditions in the watershed.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Planned quarterly water quality monitoring events. Completed the first event with 33 trained volunteers collecting water quality data at 11 sites in the Upper Merced River Watershed.
- ◆ Coordinated a meeting between archeologists and a representative of the Mariposa Indian Council regarding planned actions to protect Bower Cave from unauthorized access.
- ◆ Completed an action plan for Jordan Creek/Bower Cave.
- ◆ Restored a two and one-half mile stretch of the South Fork Trail between Hites Cove and the Savage-Lundy Trail junction. Ten volunteers worked for eight hours removing brush, cutting back poison oak, and repairing the trail.
- ◆ Established photo monitoring points at three BLM recreational sites.
- ◆ Attended DOC watershed coordinator training workshops.



Volunteers remove brush and poison oak from the South Fork Trail of the Upper Merced River

Benefits to CALFED Program

Ecosystem Quality – Monitoring of recreational impacts along the Merced River between the North Fork and El Portal is occurring quarterly and will provide data for mitigation efforts.

Drinking Water Quality – Coordinated the collection of water quality data at 11 sites along the Upper Merced River Watershed. A Quality Assurance Program Plan for the Upper Merced River Watershed has been approved by the Quality Assurance Officer of the State Water Resource Control Board.

Water Supply – The Merced River is a major tributary to the Bay Delta System. By gathering data on current conditions in its watershed, the Upper Merced River Watershed Council will be able to identify and plan restoration actions that will protect the water supply. Monitoring activities are funded by a Proposition 13 Phase II grant.

Mojave Desert/Mountain Resource Conservation & Development Council

Upper Kern / South Fork Kern Watersheds



Amount Funded: \$216,236

Additional Funding Obtained to Date:

Background

The area provides tremendous recreational opportunities for millions of people. Visitors kayak, ride bicycles, motorcycles or horses, boat, fish, hike or simply relax. As the population increases so do the challenges. Trash is thrown into rivers and along riverbanks while unwary visitors spread non-native and noxious weeds. Over the past several years, fires have burned hundreds of thousands of acres contributing to sedimentation, erosion, and the destruction of habitat. Not only are the spawning areas for the Golden Trout threatened, but also so is the largest contiguous cottonwood-willow riparian habitat in the San Joaquin-Sacramento River drainage. The demand for water downstream is immense. Kern Valley's diverse communities can come together to have a positive impact.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Presented information to the Kern River Valley Chamber of Commerce on watershed issues.
- ◆ Assisted in obtaining a permit and organizing CDF seasonal fire crews for the removal of dead and downed trees and limbs along a seven-mile stretch of the South Fork to reduce sedimentation and increase flow in the river channel.
- ◆ Presented 22 model development principles designed to protect a watershed to members of a Kern County Task force soliciting input for the Kern River Valley Specific Plan.
- ◆ Partnered with the Kernville Union School District and enlisted volunteers to develop educational materials.
- ◆ Had a watershed information display at the Turkey Vulture Festival at the Kern River Preserve. Conducted outreach activities and interacted with many local stakeholders.
- ◆ Compiled literature on post-fire erosion control and revegetation efforts after recent fires.



*Flood Irrigation in the South Fork
area of the Kern River Valley*

Benefits to CALFED Program

Watershed Management - Conducted site visits to gather information pertinent to local irrigation diversion points and irrigation ditch systems along the South Fork of the Kern River.

Drinking Water Quality - Worked with 10 out of 65 small Mutual Water Companies to apply for funding to meet the new maximum contaminant level for arsenic. Two systems submitted pre-applications for grants for arsenic mitigation totaling \$150,000.

Water Use Efficiency - Collected baseline water usage and quality data from irrigation runoff. The data gathered will help determine the best management practices for irrigation efficiency and to determine potential water contaminants in the runoff to improve water quality and quantity for ground water recharge in the San Joaquin Valley. By keeping small systems viable, we are able to assist them in maintaining their ground water sources rather than relying on larger commercial water providers. Supply source diversity decreases impacts to water usage from the river and lake.

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Santa Monica Bay Watershed



Amount Funded: \$230,892

Additional Funding Obtained to Date:

Background

Ballona Creek drains a watershed of about 127 square miles and is the largest drainage tributary to Santa Monica Bay. The watershed has historically experienced, and continues to experience, a significant growth in population and related demand for housing, business development and coastal amenities. Also, decreased natural land surfaces have reduced infiltration of rainfall and the replenishment of groundwater. As a result, the use and reliance on imported water has increased dramatically.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ Collaborated with Malibu Creek Watershed Coordinator to develop a project proposal for a garden coordinator, who would work with homeowners to de-lawn, and teach about the uses of native plants in landscaping.
- ◆ Performed a survey of stakeholder interests that will be used to inform discussions about the direction and purpose of the Ballona Creek Task Force.
- ◆ Initiated monthly watershed walks for interested stakeholders. Tour occurred in the Westlake District of Central Los Angeles at Lafayette Park. Discussion centered on a buried stream that has the potential to be day lighted.
- ◆ Developed symposia on the Ballona Creek Watershed Management Plan for the Headwaters to Ocean Conference in October.
- ◆ Toured buried creek sites with Department of Water Resources staff to determine potential candidate sites for day lighting projects. Property owners are being contacted to enlist their support.



Stakeholders of the Ballona Creek Task Force pause by the Power of Water sculpture at Lafayette Park, site of a buried stream that Task Force members identified as a daylighting opportunity in their Watershed Management Plan.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Watershed Management – Met with political strategist Leo Briones of Centaur North Strategic Communications who expressed interest in working on an outreach program that will focus on densely populated areas of the watershed to communicate values of watershed management. The coordinator directed Mr. Briones to North East Trees, a partner agency, to help develop the project.

Ecosystem Restoration – Developed and facilitated a symposium on Urban Stream Restoration in conjunction with The River Project. Also prepared a PowerPoint presentation to introduce the topic.

Drinking Water Quality - Attended Cleaner Rivers through Effective Stakeholder TMDLs (CREST) meetings. Participated in discussions and recommended approaches that satisfy TMDLs which are harmonious with removal of concrete from channels and day lighting of storm drains.

Napa County RCD

San Pablo Bay Watershed



Amount Funded: \$228,139

Additional Funding Obtained to Date: \$818,598

Background

The Napa River drains a 426 square mile watershed that discharges directly into San Pablo Bay. The Napa River and its tributaries support a diverse and almost entirely intact community of 16 native fish species, including steelhead and Chinook salmon. Recognized concerns in the river include water diversions, storm runoff, stream bank instability, lack of riparian vegetation, in-filling of pools, loss of wetland, woodland and riparian area habitat, and overall habitat fragmentation and degradation.

Benefits to the Watershed

- ◆ The Carneros Creek Stewardship Group is moving toward agreeing to a Watershed Management Plan for the watershed and beginning to develop priority actions for that plan.
- ◆ The Sulphur Creek Watershed Task Force is moving toward agreeing to a Watershed Management Plan for the watershed.
- ◆ Watershed Forum is providing an on-going networking opportunity for stakeholders to communicate about watershed issues in a neutral setting.
- ◆ Presentations and outreach regarding the WICC WebCenter given to Environmental Education Coalition of Napa County, NCRCD Board, and WICC Board.
- ◆ WICC WebCenter being populated with watershed images, information, reports and data, and is becoming an online community communication and management tool for existing watershed groups.



Dam concrete apron in Heath Canyon Creek prior to removal.



First 2005 winter flows in Heath Canyon Creek with concrete apron removed.

Benefits to CALFED Program

Ecosystem Restoration – Worked with the Sulphur Creek Watershed Task Force to implement a DFG/NRCS grant to remove four fish barriers on Heath Canyon Creek, resulting in 1.5 miles of the stream being restored for fish habitat. The creek supports threatened steelhead trout and Chinook salmon. Implemented a stream restoration project along a half-mile stretch of Spring Creek (funded from DWR Urban Streams). Assisted the Rutherford Dust Restoration Team in developing detailed project plans for the restoration of 4 miles of the Napa River. Submitted a collaborative grant to ERP for monitoring of restoration efforts at Napa-Sonoma Marsh and lower Napa River.

Water Management – The fourth season of groundwater monitoring in the Carneros area is complete. Coordinated local volunteer effort to monitor groundwater wells for water quality.